Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Thomas, R. and R. Powell. 1995. *Typhlops titanops*.

Typhlops titanops Thomas

Typhlops lumbricalis: Thomas, 1965 (part) (not of Linnaeus, 1758:288).
Typhlops lumbricalis: Thomas, 1974 (part) (not of Linnaeus, 1758:288).
Typhlops II: Thomas, 1976:26.
Typhlops titanops Thomas, 1989:415. Type-locality, "El Mulito on Río El Mulito, 18 km N Pedernales, Pedernales Province, República Dominicana, 500 feet (152 m)." Holotype, University of Kansas Museum of Natural History (KU) 208812, an adult female collected by R. Thomas on 5 August 1975 (examined by RT).

• **Content.** No subspecies are recognized.

• **Definition.** *Typhlops titanops* is a stout blind snake characterized by (see Thomas, 1976 and 1989, for complete explanations of characters): (1) snout rounded; (2) rostral in dorsal aspect a narrow, oval to parallel-sided or waisted (RW/RL 0.42–0.55), not flared on apex, labial margin slightly flared; (3) preocular subtriangular, broadly angled (59–83°), apex truncate (mode) or rounded, lower portion contacting only 3rd of upper labials; (4) ocular length about 2/3 height, sinuosity 0.17–0.05; (5) postnasal pattern parallel to divergent; (6) postoculars 2 (1 or 3 as variants), cycloid, similar in size to body scales; (7) 1st parietal standard, spanning 2 scale rows or, as a variant, blade-like and extending laterally along posterior edge of ocular to below eye; (8) 2nd parietal present and equal in size to the 1st (but never expanded and blade-like) or absent; (9) TL to 216 mm; (10) TL/tail length in males 21–23, females 26–34; (11) TL/midbody diameter 25–30; (12) middorsal scales 231–264 ; (13) scale rows 20-18 with reduction occurring posterior to midbody (61–68% TL); (14) coloration bicolor, dorsum tan to grayish-brown, fading over a narrow midlateral zone to unpigmented venter; pigmentation not extending onto snout; no collar; (15) rectal caecum present; (16) hemipenes expanded, apical region apparently not differentiated; (17) cranium broad, width across prefrontals 88 percent of width across prootics; (18) premaxilla moderate in width, about 33% of width across prefrontals, slightly concave anteriorly and slightly protuberant, posteroventral edges transverse, forming slightly greater than right-angle juncture with broad, subtriangular blade; (19) nasals without lateral angle, narrowly bordering narial opening; (20) septomaxilla with sliver of bone extending along lateral margin of naris; anterior portion tapered; (21) frontal-parietal suture forming shallow V; (22) frontal with broad, blade-like anterior ventral blade-like process partly fused with overlying portion of frontal; (23) optic foramen canalicular; (24) postorbital process of parietal moderate; (25) temporal ridge of parietal absent; (26)

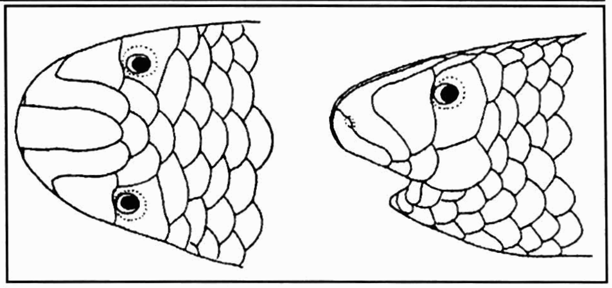
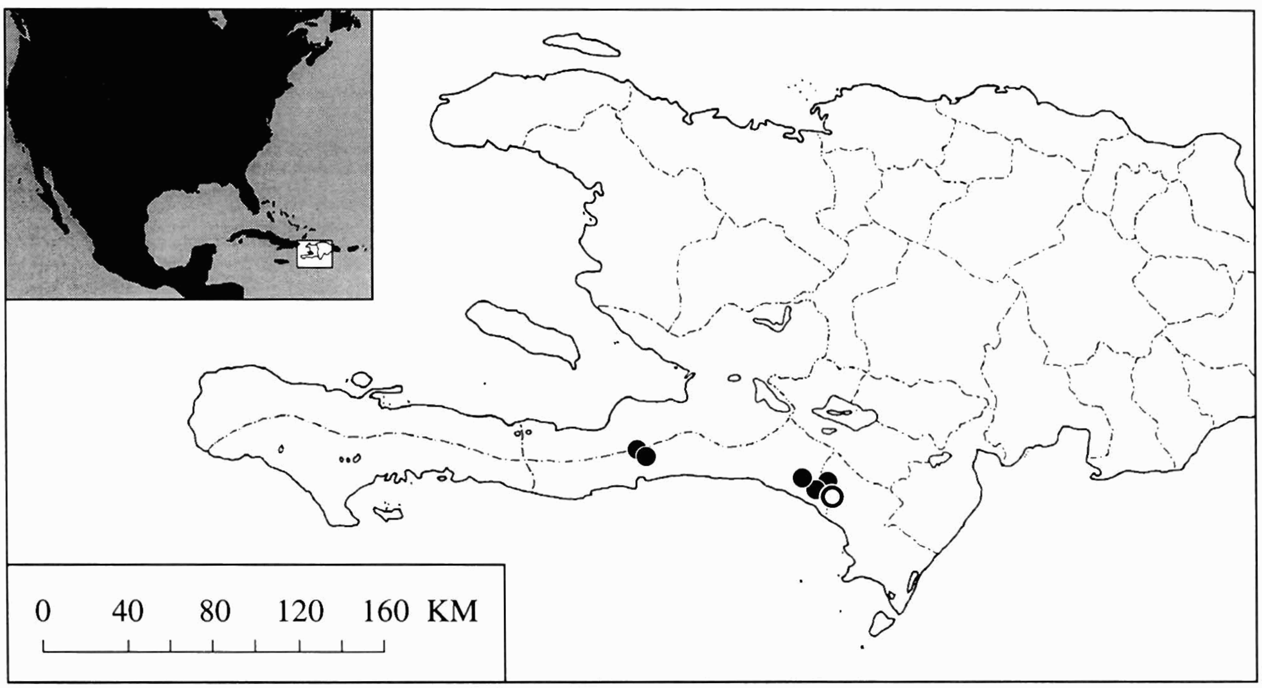


Figure. Head of *Typhlops titanops* (ASFS V2604) (from Thomas, 1989).



Map. Distribution of *Typhlops titanops* (modified from Schwartz and Henderson, 1991). The large circle marks the type-locality, dots indicate other records.

lappet of prootic small, slightly overlapping moderately long tongue, tongue not fused with parietal; (27) supraoccipitals unfused, in broad median contact; (28) exoccipitals not fused with prootics; (29) angular not sliver-like; (30) dorsal process of quadrate hooked; (31) atlantal hypapophysis tablike, 5 total hypapophyses; (32) hyoid U-shaped, composed of 2 fused ceratobranchials, basihyal absent; (33) pelvic moieties L-shaped with prominent ischia, ilia, pubic processes reduced; (34) orbit large with a large pale conjunctival space.

• **Diagnosis.** This stout-bodied *Typhlops* (to 216 mm TL) is distinguished by the following combination of characters: large eyes (orbits), preoculars moderately angled (48–78°) with a truncate apex and contacting only 3rd of supralabials; a narrow, waisted rostral, parallel to weakly divergent rostronasals complex; low number of middorsal scales (231–264); scale rows 20 reducing to 18 near midbody (at 61–66% TL); parietals double on each side, not greatly expanded; postoculars 2, cycloid; bicolor pigmentation, no pigment collar, and no pigment on snout dorsal process of quadrate hooked; and pelvic moieties with ilium, ischium, and pubis fused and L-shaped.

• **Descriptions.** In addition to the original of Thomas (1989), Thomas (1976) (as *Typhlops* II), and Schwartz and Henderson (1991) provided descriptions of this species.

• **Illustrations.** Thomas (1976 [as *Typhlops* II], 1989) provided line drawings of the head, the former included drawings of the septomaxilla and cranium.

• **Distribution.** The species is found in a limited area of the southern slopes of the La Selle-Sierra de Baoruco mountain chain between the region about Decouzé, north of Jacmel, Haiti, in the west to the area of the type-locality along the Dominican-Haitian border in the east. The species appears to be restricted to an elevational zone between about 240–727 m. All occupied habitats are mesic.

• **Fossil Record.** None.

• **Pertinent Literature.** In addition to the original description of Thomas (1989), in which he discussed relationships among Antillean congeners and provided a key, Thomas (1965, 1974) discussed *Typhlops titanops* as *T. lumbricalis*, and (1976) discussed the species as *Typhlops* II. SEA/DVS (1990) provided an index to habitats in the Dominican Republic (as *T. lumbricalis*). The species was included in the checklist of Powell et al. (1996).

• **Etymology.** The name *titanops* is from the Greek *titanos*, a reference to paleness and large size, and *ops*, eye.

• **Remark.** Frank and Ramus (1995) proposed the common name "titan worm snake" for this species. Because this represents an incorrect interpretation of the specific epithet, we prefer to avoid its use.

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